

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

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LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 GSA-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 STR-08 RSR-01

NEA-10 INT-08 /193 W

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R 090515Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8244

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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TAGS: PFOR, EGEN,ECON,ETRD,ASEAN

SUBJECT: ASEAN AIDE MEMOIRE EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER JAPANESE

SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION

REFS: JAKARTA 8118 AND 8251

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER ADAM MALIK, ACTING ON
BEHALF OF ASEAN GOVERNMENTS, PRESENTED AIDE MEMOIRE
AUGUST 6 TO JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TANAKA IN JAKARTA
CONCERNING JAPANESE SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION.
AIDE MEMOIRE IS FIRST MAJOR JOINT ASEAN APPROACH
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TO JAPAN THAT WE ARE AWARE OF. IT REFLECTS

SPECIFIC LONG RANGE CONCERN OF ASEAN NATURAL RUBBER PRODUCERS OVER COMPETITION FROM JAPANESE SYNTHETICS. ALSO, AT LEAST FROM INDONESIAN VIEWPOINT, AIDE MEMOIRE APPEARS TO BE IMPLICIT EXPRESSION OF BROADER CONCERN OVER GROWING JAPANESE ECONOMIC POWER. FOLLOWING IS BASED ON JAKARTA PRESS REPORTS. (KOMPAS, ANTARA, INDONESIA RAYA.) END SUMMARY

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. ASEAN AIDE MEMOIRE, WHICH MALIK PRESENTED IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF ASEAN STANDING COMMITTEE, WAS PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH DECISION OF ASEAN GOVERNMENTS AT ASEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AT PATTAYA APRIL 18, AND AT MEETING OF ASEAN SECRETARIES GENERAL IN JAKARTA JULY 5-6 (REFTELS). FOREIGN DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID COPIES OF AIDE MEMOIRE WERE BEING CONVEYED BY GOVERNMENTS OF OTHER ASEAN NATIONS TO JAPANESE AMBASSADORS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES.

2. DOCUMENT EXPRESSED GRAVE CONCERN OVER RAPID AND INDISCRIMINATE EXPANSION OF JAPANESE SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS, AND ASKED GOJ TO TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES TO PREVENT JAPANESE SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION FROM ENDANGERING ECONOMIES OF ASEAN NATIONS. AIDE

MEMOIRE ALSO NOTED READINESS OF ASEAN GOVERNMENTS TO HOLD REGULAR CONSULTATIONS WITH GOJ CONCERNING THIS PROBLEM.

3. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS ACCOMPANYING ANNOUNCEMENT OF AIDE MEMOIRE, JAPANESE SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION HAS INCREASED FROM 51,000 TONS A YEAR IN 1961, TO 850,000 TONS IN 1972, OF WHICH 245,000 TONS WERE EXPORTED. INDONESIA RAYA REPORT, CITING RECENT STATEMENT BY MALIK, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAID ASEAN NOT AS CONCERNED ABOUT US SYNTHETIC RUBBER PRODUCTION SINCE US OUTPUT (200,000 TONS A YEAR) IS PREDOMINATELY FOR US DOMESTIC MARKET. ACCORDING TO KOMPAS STORY, ASEAN RUBBER PRODUCERS, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA AND THAILAND, ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT JAPANESE PLANS TO BUILD SYNTHETIC RUBBER PLANTS IN FORM OF JOINT VENTURES IN PUERTO RICO, IRAN AND

KOREA.

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4. COMMENT: AIDE MEMOIRE IS FIRST MAJOR
JOINT ASEAN APPROACH TO JAPAN THAT WE KNOW
OF. TIMING OF DOCUMENT IS CURIOUS, IN VIEW
OF VERY HIGH CURRENT NATURAL RUBBER PRICES
AND REPORTED DIFFICULTIES IN JAPANESE SYNTHETIC
RUBBER INDUSTRY AS RESULT OF SOARING PETROLEUM
PRICES. NEVERTHELESS AIDE MEMOIRE DOUBTLESS
REFLECTS LONG-RANGE CONCERN OF INDONESIA,
THAILAND AND MALAYSIA OVER SYNTHETIC RUBBER
THREAT. IN ADDITION, EXTRAORDINARY ATTENTION
WHICH MALIK HAS GIVEN TO SYNTHETIC RUBBER
ISSUE IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS SUGGESTS THAT
GOI, AT LEAST, REGARDS THIS ASEAN DEMARCHE
AS AN IMPLICIT EXPRESSION OF A MUCH BROADER
CONCERN OVER JAPAN'S GROWING ECONOMIC POWER.
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